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Statement submitted by Korean Association for Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals for the United Nations, a non-governmental organization in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council*

The Secretary-General has received the following statement, which is being circulated in accordance with paragraphs 30 and 31 of Economic and Social Council resolution 1996/31.

* The present statement is issued without formal editing.

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Statement

Since the urban population reached half of the world's population in 2009, the world has witnessed more than 20 mega-cities with over 10 million people. By 2040, 20 more mega-cities are expected to grow in Asia alone.

However, such large urbanization poses many problems. Excessive population growth in cities without adequate infrastructure creates environmental disasters and energy shortages. In particular, global warming and particulate matter issues of mega-cities are highly serious and have a great impact on people's health.

Seoul, one of the leading mega-cities in Asia, is responding quickly to these problems. Seoul Metropolitan Government promotes electric cars to build an eco-friendly city, planning to install 200 mobile electric car chargers throughout the city by 2018. Electricity taxis, buses, motorcycles, as well as "share-cars" are also expanding. More than one million citizens are currently using share-cars in Seoul, having the effect of replacing 8.5 cars per car and reducing 486 tons of greenhouse gases per year.

Seoul's Energy Independence policy is world-class. "One Less Nuclear Power Plant" was introduced at the 21st General Assembly Action Day of the UNFCCC in 2015. Seoul also created the Seoul Energy Fund for circulation and sharing of energy. Furthermore, the "Energy Self-Sufficient Village Project" supports neighborhoods where residents themselves recognize the problem of energy crisis and aim for energy independence. These 55 established villages are implementing energy independence through installing solar energy generators, etc.

In addition, Seoul is pushing forward an urban regeneration project, designating 133 locations within the city. By 2025, it aims to revitalize the city through harmonizing four goals: job creation, safe residential environment, decentralization, and sustainable future. Moreover, the city is also constructing a thousand forests and a thousand gardens. Currently, 1,010 forests and 1,094 gardens with a total of 10 million trees have been formed.

Even in the field of water re-use, Seoul is building a world-class water purification system through the development of advanced technology and effective policy management. It puts the existing massive on-ground water recycling centers underground while transforming the surface into green fields, and sells bio-gas generated during sewage treatment as eco-friendly fuel. This Tomorrow Water Process (TWP) was introduced at the United Nations High-level Political Forum on Sustainable Development (HLPF) in 2016.

To conclude, Seoul has actively implemented eco-friendly policies since the adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the United Nations in 2015. As a leading economic and cultural hub of Asia, these actions and policies of Seoul will have a great influence on neighboring regions. Seoul even takes the role of international leader of Local Governments for Sustainability (ICLEI) to create a model that is applicable to other cities and even rural areas. With the Korean Association for Supporting the Sustainable Development Goals for the United Nations planning to support Seoul with its various international partnerships, the city can further complement and develop its activities locally and globally. Therefore, Seoul will spread its efforts on sustainability not only as a mega-city, but as a city that can help the overall global and local community.